

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 261163

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SUBJECT: DISARMAMENT: REVISED SYRIAN RES ON NAPALM AND
OTHER INCENDIARIES

REF: A) USUN 5323; B) 5344; C) STATE 257483

1. ALTHOUGH MORE MODERATE IN TONE THAN ORIGINAL VERSION,
REVISED SYRIAN DRAFT RES RETAINS SEVERAL UNACCEPTABLE ELE-
MENTS. CONDEMNATION OF USE OF INCENDIARIES "WHERE IT
DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY MAY AFFECT PERSONNEL" (OP PARA 1)
WOULD SEEM TO HAVE NO PRACTICAL DIFFERENCE FROM BLANKET
CONDEMNATION IN ORIGINAL DRAFT; WE CANNOT ACCEPT "CON-
DEMNS" IN ANY CASE. OP PARA 2, URGING MORATORIUM ON
"PRODUCTION, STOCKPILING, PROLIFERATION AND USE" OF IN-
CENDIARIES PENDING AGREEMENTS ON THEIR PROHIBION,
ASSUMES NEGOTIATING OBJECTIVES IN WAY THAT PREJUDGES ON-
GOING WORK IN ICRC EXPERTS CONFERENCE AND DIPLOMATIC CON-
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PAGE 02 STATE 261163

ERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW (SEE REF C) WHILE

POSTULATING UNACCEPTABLE INTERIM APPROACH. IN ADDITION, FIFTH PREAMBULAR PARA OVERSTATES OUTCOME IN FIRST SESSION OF THE EXPERTS CONFERENCE.

2. ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS WOULD JUSTIFY NEGATIVE US VOTE. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE POLITICALLY SENSITIVE NATURE OF THIS TOPIC AND ITS STRONG EMOTIONAL OVERTONES, AND ESPECIALLY IF US WERE FACED WITH ISOLATION OR NEAR-ISOLATION IN VOTING AGAINST RES, WE COULD MAKE SAME NEGATIVE POINTS FOR RECORD BY ABSTENTION AND EXPLANATION OF VOTE.

3. USDEL SHOULD THEREFORE INDICATE TO OUR PRINCIPAL ALLIES OUR OPPOSITION TO THIS RES AND ASK THEM TO JOIN US IN VOTING AGAINST IT. IF NOT JOINED BY PRINCIPAL ALLIES, DEL SHOULD ABSTAIN WITH BRIEF EXPLANATION OF VOTE ALONG FOLLOWING LINES: "LAST WEEK MY DELEGATION EXPLAINED ITS VOTE ON (SWEDISH) RES CONCERNING NAPALM, INCENDIARIES AND CERTAIN OTHER CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS, SETTING OUT OUR VIEWS ON THE PROPER APPROACH TO THE NEXT STAGE OF CONSTRUCTIVE INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATION OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE USE OF SUCH WEAPONS. THE RESOLUTION NOW BEFORE US RUNS CONTRARY TO SUCH AN APPROACH. IT PREJUDGES THE OUTCOME OF THE DELIVERATIONS WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE DURING THE COMING YEAR. IN PARTICULAR IT FAILS TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE MANY COMPLEX QUESTIONS CONCERNING INCENDIARY WEAPONS WHICH MUST BE EXAMINED AT THE SECOND SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF EXPERTS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS BEFORE ANY FIRM CONCLUSIONS CAN BE DRAWN REGARDING THE SCOPE OF POSSIBLE RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF NAPALM AND OTHER INCENDIARIES. MY GOVERNMENT EXPECTS TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THE EXPERTS' ONGOING WORK. MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, WE CANNOT ACCEPT THE CATEGORICAL CONCLUSION IN THE PRESENT RESOLUTION REGARDING THE NEED FOR PROHIBITION OF THE USE OF ALL INCENDIARY WEAPONS. ACCORDINGLY, THE UNITED STATES WILL ABSTAIN IN THE VOTING ON THE RESOLUTION." INGERSOLL
MUNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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